

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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R 010927Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 850

INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 6000

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, PFOR, PK, IN

SUBJ: HAMID KHAN, PEOPLES' PARTY CHIEF, SWORN

IN AS NEW AZAD KASHMIR PRIME MINISTER

REF: ISLAMABAD 5184

SUMMARY: KHAN ABDUL HAMID KHAN, PRESIDENT OF AZAD KASHMIR PEOPLES' PARTY (AKPP), WAS SWORN IN JUNE 28 AS NEW AK PRIME MINISTER. IT IS NOW EVIDENT THAT AKPP WILL FORM GOVERNMENT ON ITS OWN, EXCLUDING ITS PARTNERS IN THE ALLIANCE WHICH BROUGHT IT TO VICTORY IN MAY 18 ELECTION. ALTHOUGH PARTNERS ARE BITTER THAT THEY WERE EXCLUDED, THERE IS LITTLE THEY CAN DO IN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY WHERE PEOPLES' PARTY HOLDS OVER TWO-THIRDS MAJORITY. HAMID KHAN, IN BUDGET SPEECH, PROMISED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD CONCENTRATE ON SOLUTION TO KASHMIR PROBLEM "IN THE SPIRIT OF THE TIME" OV AVOIDING CONFRONTATION AND WOULD SEEK TO SET UP JUST SOCIETY WITH ENHANCED WELFARE SERVICES. WE BELIEVE HAMID WILL FOLLOW DICATES OF PAK PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO WHO EMERGES AS REAL WINNER IN THE AK DRAMA NOW BEING COMPLETED. END SUMMARY.

1. KHAN ABDUL HAMID KHAN, PRESIDENT OF AZAD KASHMIR

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PEOPLES' PARTY (AKPP), WAS ELECTED UNOPPOSED AS A.K.

PRIME MINISTER ON JUNE 28. THE SAME DAY AKPP'S CANDIDATES FOR SPEAKER, DEPUTY SPEAKER AND WOMEN'S REPRESENTATIVES (TWO SEATS) WERE DECLARED ELECTED, ALSO UNOPPOSED. PRIME MINISTER HAMID KHAN HAS INDICATED, ACCORDING TO PAKISTAN TIMES JUNE 30, THAT A CABINET OF SIX OR SEVEN WOULD BE FORMED WITHIN THE WEEK. WHILE HE SAID IT WAS POSSIBLE ONE OF THE MINISTERS MAY NOT BE FROM AKPP, HE ASSERTED IT WOULD NOT BE A COALITION GOVERNMENT. REPRESENTATIVES OF THREE OTHER PARTIES WHICH HAD JOINED AKPP IN ALLIANCE IN WHSK BY ALL ACCOUNTS WAS CONSPICUOUSLY FRAUDULENT MAY 18 ELECTION, BOYCOTTED ASSEMBLY PROCEEDINGS IN PROTEST, HENCE UNOPPOSED VOTE FOR HAMID.

2. THE NEW AK PRIME MINISTER, IN PRESENTATION OF 1975-76 BUDGET ON JUNE 29, INDICATED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD CONCENTRATE ON "SOLUTION TO THE KASHMIR ISSUE AND SETTING UP OF A JUST AND EMANCIPATED SOCIETY BASED ON THE PRINCIPLES OF ISLAM." THE GOAL OF ACCESSION TO PAKISTAN ON THE BASIS OF SELF-DETERMINATION OF KASHMIRI PEOPLE WILL BE PURSUED "IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SPIRIT OF THE TIME" OF AVOIDING CONFRONTATION, HE SAID. THIS FORMULATION NOTICEABLY MORE CAUTIOUS THAN AK PRESIDENT IBRAHIM'S COMMENTS CONCERNING LIBERATION OF "OCCUPIED" KASHMI IN HIS INAUGURAL SPEECH (REPORTED REFTEL). HAMID KHAN EXCORIATED THE WASTE, CORRUPTION AND INEFFICIENCY OF HIS PREDECESSOR AND THANKED THE PAKISTAN PRIME MINISTER FOR HIS ASSISTANCE TO THE KASHMIRIS' CAUSE (MENTIONING HIS STAND AT TASHKENT) AND FOR GENEROUS DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE.

3. EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS THAT DECISION TO EXCLUDE ALLIANCE PARTNERS IN COALITION WAS MADE BY PAK PRIME MINISTER HIMSELF AND CONVEYED TO AKPP LEGISLATORS IN MEETING HELD JUNE 27 IN RAWALPINDI UNDER HIS CHAIRMANSHIP. ALLIANCE PARTNERS, WHO HAD HOPED TO BE PART OF COALITION GOVERNMENT AND EXPECTED, AS A MINIMUM, TO BE CONSULTED WERE CAUGHT OFF GUARD AND FAILED TO FILE PAPERS FOR THEIR OWN CANDIDATES FOR CONFIDENTIAL

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ASSEMBLY OFFICERS AND SEATS RESERVED FOR WOMEN. WE UNDERSTAND THEY ARE STILL WORKING OUT STRATEGY WHICH MAY NOW PUT THEM IN THE ROLE OF OPPOSITION.

4. HAMID KHAN, A RETIRED JUDGE WHEN APPOINTED AK PRESIDENT IN LATE 1950'S, IS CONSIDERED AN INTELLIGENT, HONEST IF UNASSERTIVE MAN WHO HAS LIVED IN NEAR POVERTY IN RETIREMENT FOR PAST 15 YEARS. WE UNDER-

STAND THAT HIS BROTHER, FEDERAL HOME MINISTER QAIYUM KHAN, WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN PERSUADING HAMID KHAN TO TAKE UP THIS LEADERSHIP POSITION. WE PRESUME THAT, IN THE ABSENCE OF HIGH CALIBER, TRUSTED (BY BHUTTO) AK PEOPLES' PARTY LEADERS, HAMID KHAN WAS BROUGHT BACK FROM RETIREMENT IN RAWALPINDI BY PM IN NOVEMBER 1974 TO LEAD THE PARTY, AND NOW THE GOVERNMENT, IN BELIEF THAT HE WOULD ACQUIESCE IN GOP CONTROL OVER AZAD KASHMIR AFFAIRS. WE ARE UNCERTAIN OF FUTURE RELATIONSHIP OF HAMID KHAN AND NEW AK PRESIDENT IBRAHIM. LATTER, OF COURSE, SPEARHEADED REVOLT IN MUSLIM CONFERENCE WICH BROUGHT DOWN FORMER AK PRESIDENT QAYYUM AND FORGED ALLIANCE WITH AKPP. WE DO NOT EXPECT IBRAHIM TO PUT UP STRONG FIGHT ON BEHALF OF HIS ALLIANCE PARTNERS -- K.H. KHURSID AND CHAUDHRY NOORNUSSEIN -- WHO ARE IN ANY CASE OLD RIVALS. IBRAHIM IS ALSO CONSTRAINED BY FACT THAT AKPP PROBABLY HAS 2/3 MAJORITY VOTES TO REMOVE THE PRESIDENT. WHATEVER RELATIONSHIP DEVELOPS, NEITHER HAMID NOR IBRAHIM CAN BE EXPECTED TO DEVELOP A POLITICAL BASE OF HIS OWN. BOTH ARE AND WILL REMAIN DEPENDENT ON THE BACKING OF BHUTTO, WHO EMERGES AS THE REAL WINNER IN THE AK DRAMA NOW BEING COMPLETED. LUPPI

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